

VOLUME 14 EDITION 50

The Winkler Morden Voice

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Holiday cheer

Winkler and District Christmas Cheerboard volunteers Becky Loewen (left) and Crystal Rempel with some of the gifts that went out with last week's hampers. For the full story, see Pg. 3.

PHOTO BY ASHLEIGH VIVEIROS/VOICE

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Morden moves into moderate drought stage due to low lake levels

By Lorne Stelmach

The City of Morden began asking residents to conserve water again last week as it moved into a moderate drought stage.

It became a necessary precautionary step given how the water level at Lake Minnewasta has declined this fall.

"The drought plan requires us to activate moderate drought conditions if the water level in the lake goes below three feet from full supply level," explained deputy city manager Santokh Randhawa.

"The city waited to declare the drought stage so that it does not look premature," he added. "However,

now the lake level has reached close to five feet below full supply level and still no snow on the ground [at the time of the interview last week] and not much snow in the forecast. Therefore, the city choose to declare moderate drought stage to comply with the plan.

"If the weather conditions change and we get lot of snow which can fill the lake, the city will go back to the normal stage," said Randhawa.

According to Morden's drought plan, moderate conditions are the first stage below normal levels and require a target of a 10 per cent reduction in water usage. Severe conditions then bring in a 25 per cent target, and ex-

treme conditions mean a 30 per cent reduction or higher.

The plan was put together in the midst of extreme drought conditions in 2021 when low precipitation and high temperatures resulted in the city placing water restrictions on several sectors.

During the moderate drought stage, the City urges residents to be mindful of water usage, including taking shorter showers and reducing outdoor watering activities such as making and maintaining outdoor ice rinks.

Here are a few other examples of how residents can help conserve water during winter:

- Prevent freezing and potential leaks by insulating exposed pipes and faucets.
- Collect and use melted snow for non-potable purposes such as watering plants and cleaning outdoor areas.
- Lowering the indoor heating temperature by a few degrees can reduce the demand for hot water, resulting in lower water consumption. Dress warmly and use blankets to stay comfortable.
- Regularly check for leaks in

plumbing fixtures such as toilets and faucets. Fix any leaks promptly to prevent water waste.

- Wait until you have a full load before running the dishwasher or washing machine. This maximizes water and energy efficiency.

- Rather than letting the faucet run while washing dishes, fill a basin with soapy water for washing and another with clean water for rinsing. This saves water compared to continuous running water.

- Only flush the toilet when necessary.

For more tips and resources on water conservation, head to the website conservation.mymorden.ca.

Randhawa suggested they are not asking too much of residents yet at this point, and he was confident people would do their part.

"Moderate drought stage requires the residents to be cognizant of their water use and start conserving water voluntarily," he said. "The city is confident that residents will conserve water, as they have done in the past in 2021."



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Winkler Cheerboard delivers 397 hampers

By Ashleigh Viveiros

Volunteers with the Winkler and District Christmas Cheerboard were hard at work last week bringing joy to hundreds of local families.

Cheerboard volunteers spent Tuesday and Wednesday at the Meridian Exhibition Centre wrapping up children's presents to go out with the grocery gift cards delivered to 397 households in and around Winkler.

Cheerboard president, Crystal Rempel notes that number is down a bit from 2022.

"We actually did 424 last year, but we did change our application system this year," she said, explaining they moved applications online and tweaked some of the guidelines to ensure the hampers are getting to the right people.

Rempel said they looked at the Manitoba Housing criteria and also worked with Central Station to ensure the application process was as fair as possible and accessible to those families who need help putting food on the table through the holidays. They also work closely with the school liaison workers and other service providers to ensure qualifying families are aware of the program.

"We still want to make it easy enough that people that need it can get it," she said, noting they'll be assessing how the changes went this year and if further adjustments are needed.

There's a lot of diversity in the families the Cheer Board helps each year, Rempel shared. It ranges from single-person households to large fam-

ilies, longtime Winkler residents as well as many newcomers to the community and to Canada.

Every hamper included a Co-op gift card for recipients to use on groceries. Every child under 12 received a wrapped toy purchased at cost from Janzen's Hobbyland or Canadian Tire, while older kids received gift cards to Canadian Tire or Superstore.

Moving the grocery part of the hampers to gift cards instead of an actual hamper filled with food gives recipients more control over what they're getting, Rempel noted.

"With how diverse our community has become, this allows them to get things they will use," she said. "They can buy according to what their family uses and will eat ... it empowers them to be able to make those choices."

On the fundraising front, the Cheerboard had raised \$86,453 of its \$130,000 goal as of last week.

Rempel is confident donations over the next few weeks will bring them closer to that goal.

"It's always a little nervous in the end of November, because that's when we decide how much we're giving out," she said. "But people are just kind of gearing up for Christmas right now."

"Over the past years, the money still keeps coming in to the end of December and into January. So we can't just bank on what we see now ... we haven't met our goal yet, but we anticipate that we will."

If you'd like to help them do that, head to winklercheerboard.com to make a donation.

"We're so appreciative of everyone who stands behind us for the greater good," Rempel said. "This is for our neighbours and it's for our family members and it's for our friends."

"We all want to just be there for each other and support each other through challenging times."



PHOTO BY ASHLEIGH VIVEIROS/VOICE

Cheerboard volunteers spent last week Tuesday and Wednesday wrapping presents and preparing other items to go out with this year's hamper deliveries.

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Nancy Penner for Mayor
Leadership Integrity Commitment

Vigil honours the victims of violence against women

By Ashleigh Viveiros

Genesis House, the regional shelter for the victims of domestic violence, teamed up with Agape House in Steinbach and the Ginew Wellness Centre for a vigil last week to mark the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women.

People filled the Makoons Centre on the Roseau River Anishinaabe First Nation Dec. 7 for a ceremony that shone the spotlight on domestic violence in our communities and also honoured missing and murdered Manitoba women. A similar gathering was held in Carman the day before.

Genesis House executive director Ang Braun noted they've partnered with Roseau River service providers in the past on programming, but this is the first time they've hosted this vigil there.

"We've been trying to find ways to build bridges with our Indigenous neighbours," she said. "We recognize as an organization that Indigenous women are at a much higher risk for

violence than other Canadian women."

Seventeen Manitoba women have been murdered in 2023, Braun said, referring to the number shared at the provincial ceremony for the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women.

"Normally we would see around 12, which is still too high," she said, observing that the pandemic years have exacerbated issues of domestic violence in communities across the province. "There are so many more people that are struggling."

Ceremonies held across Canada on and around Dec. 6 mark the anniversary of the murders of 14 young women at l'École Polytechnique de Montréal in 1989.

Violence against women remains a major societal issue today, 34 years later.

"I think most people still think it's far away from us, it doesn't happen here, but it does," Braun said, urging people to speak up when they see violence happening or hear inappropriate



PHOTOS BY ASHLEIGH VIVEIROS/VOICE

Above: Genesis House's Ang Braun speaks at last week's vigil in honour of the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women. Right: Jo Seenie sings a warrior women's song in memory of missing and murdered Indigenous women.

ate comments being made. "Call them out. I think the shift in what is acceptable has to change. And we're all responsible for that. That's something we can all do.

"It's not just a women's issue," Braun stressed. "All of society has to take responsibility to eliminate this violence.

"As a society, we cannot and we must not tolerate this," she said. "Living free of violence is a human right, not a privilege."

"WE REMEMBER THEM AND KEEP FIGHTING"

Last Thursday's gathering began with a spiritual water ceremony led by Hilda Atkinson, who then shared briefly about her own experience with domestic violence and the loss of a family member to violence.

"I want to think about all the ladies that have to survive and have to go through those things. It's really hard on people when stuff like



that happens," she said. "We will pray for them and remember them and keep fighting ... to be strong."

Jo Seenie, a Roseau River Wolf Clan member who has been involved in searching for the remains of missing Indigenous women, shared a few thoughts about her experiences and sang a heartfelt lament in memory of the victims.

"I've been active for the last 17 years, volunteering in the ground search. I've been to many places to help search for loved ones," Seenie said, sharing that her involvement began in the wake of her family's own tragedies: her father was murdered in 1982 and her uncle has been missing for over 20 years.

"I walk this life because I understand what it feels like to have someone missing," she said. "I know what it feels like to have someone murdered.

"They say time heals, but it doesn't. You just learn how to live with it ... you learn how to walk with it, and you walk with the memory of when it happened."

Continued on page 5

Our mistake

Our story last week on the Pembina Valley Astro Club ornament fundraiser (Pg. 12) incorrectly noted that Lasered Edge had last year sold ornaments in support of the Pembina Val-

ley Humane Society, raising \$1,000.

That fundraiser actually took place in 2020.

We regret the error and any confusion it may have caused.

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The Forge gym hosts Max Axle Challenge

By Lorne Stelmach

Competitors gathered at The Forge gym in Winkler Saturday to challenge themselves for a good cause.

The event was in support of the Candlelights Childhood Cancer Support Group, and The Forge owner Ryan Froese was happy to be supporting a cause that he values.

"The Candlelighters always do such a great job with all that they do for people," he said in between events. "I'm hoping to raise at least a \$1,000 for them."

All of the entry fees were being donated to the organization as well as proceeds from the sale of T-shirts and other items.

Froese had originally expected 30 competitors, but the numbers were cut down as a result of the winter storm and poor road conditions.

"They were doing a max weight

attempt at an axle clean and press," said Froese, explaining how the competitors have three attempts to lift up to the shoulders and then above the head. It was then on to an 18-inch dead lift.

"It's a fun opportunity for competitors to come out and push themselves, test themselves, and see what they can do as well as donate to a great cause," said Froese.

The Forge has only been open now for about four months, but this was an event that was on Froese's wish list.

"This has always been something I have wanted to do. I've hosted competitions before, but never under The Forge," he said. "This is a new thing for me, but I've always wanted to host a competition in a way where I'm benefiting the community."

One of the competitors was Layne Campbell, a 24-year-old lifter from Roblin.



PHOTO BY LORNE STELMACH/VOICE

Layne Campbell was one of the competitors in The Forge gym's Max Axle Challenge last weekend, which raised funds for the Candlelighters Childhood Cancer Support Group.

"I started into strongmans just a little over two years ago," he said. "I've done about five competitions so far. It's fun, and the community is amazing ... it's a really fun sport."

"I'm very happy to be part of this event," Campbell added. "My grandmother passed away from cancer, so it does make me happy to be able to help fundraise for something like this."

Representing Candlelighters was board chairperson Naomi Fehr.

"It's amazing to see the support," she said. "In the last number of years, word has gotten out about our charity, and it used to be that only our families would know about it. More and more people are hearing about who we are and what we do."

"Events like this help make that happen, and we're so thankful for it."



PHOTO BY ASHLEIGH VIVEIROS/VOICE

Hilda Atkinson (left) received a blanket from Genesis House in thanks for her leading the water ceremony at the vigil.

> VIGIL, FROM PG. 4

Violence against woman has affected many local families, Seenie reflected.

"We also have a history of missing and murdered women here in our community," she said, pointing to Roseau River residents like Christina Littlejohn and Mary Lisa Smith, who have been missing since 1968 and 1999, respectively.

It's not easy helping family members search for lost loved ones, but it's something Seenie feels called to do.

"I do my best to live my clan. There's roles, responsibilities, duties and obligations as your clan, and that's what I use when I go search," she said. "I use my scent, my sight, my hearing ... and mother instinct—I use what I am as a mom, I use that when I'm out there."

"I've learned that there's a strength that women have," Seenie said. "All of us moms, all of us grandmothers,

we have this strength. We do anything to protect our family ... when they search, they have no boundaries."

Seenie said action needs to be taken much sooner when a family reports a loved one missing.

"They need to react right away," she stressed. "A parent knows their child. Even if they're struggling, they know their child or their loved ones. They know them. If something's not right, they're not calling [back], then react."

The ceremony also included the reading of the names of the 14 l'École Polytechnique victims, lighting candles in honour of all victims of violence against women, a moment of silence, and an opportunity for a few other community members to share personal experiences they've had with domestic violence.

The **Voice**

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News flash: the elderly are just like us

Okay, people: it's time to stop getting ridiculously over-excited whenever you discover a senior citizen who does a thing you don't expect them to be doing.

You know what I mean: there's 87-year-old Shirley Curry, known as Skyrim Grandma for her enjoyment of the Elder Scrolls video game.

There's 65-year-old Lena Salmi from Helsinki known as Skateboard Grandma (heck, Tony Hawk is 55, does this qualify him as unusual for being a skateboarder?). And the list goes on.

I get it. People like to celebrate the elderly. I mean, we have an annual tradition that crosses cultures simply celebrating living for an extra year (birthdays), so I guess I shouldn't be surprised when we get a little carried away.

The reality is that old people do stuff. Rumour has it that old people have been doing stuff since there have been old people.

I mean, I'm sure there are 90-year-old grandpas who still get up before dawn to take care of the cows (way more amazing to me than riding a skateboard, to be honest) and no one hears about them.

A lot of the stuff we continue to be told to be shocked about like old peo-

ple playing video games has been around for a while. The first video game was invented in 1958 ... that means if you are 65 or younger video games have been around your entire life, so don't be surprised if someone who was a teenager when they came out is still playing them now.

Old people run, they ride bikes, they climb mountains, they scuba dive, they go to dances, they listen to punk music (which came out in the early '70s, BTW), some of them love Billie Eilish and Taylor Swift, they watch cartoons.

It isn't amazing? It's actually a little patronizing, like saying, "Wow, I thought you'd be off drooling somewhere in a chair but you actually like watching Marvel and DC superhero movies?!?!? Incredible!!" To which I can only imagine said elderly person responding, "Well, yeah. I mean, the first Superman comic came out 85 years ago before I was born. Why wouldn't I like them?"

I want to let you in on a shocking secret: I have heard tell that some old people still enjoy—GULP—sexual relations. Okay, go wash your eyes out with soap now. I will wait here.

I know I am being a little ridiculous and perhaps over-reacting, but often

these and various other highlights of elderly living simply serve to present the senior population as some weird species that emerged from cocoons at the age of 65 in some hidden forest somewhere like some kind of gentle zombie.

Part of the problem is the somewhat arbitrary definition of old/senior/elderly. It seems to be a moving target and I'd be happy if we just got rid of such categories. The elderly are just as diverse as the non-elderly and have the same interests, longings, and (mostly) capabilities.

Obviously, we all run down after a while. I can't climb nearly as many trees as I used to. I mean, I can, but the consequences of falling out have changed dramatically from when I was 10.

I suppose what I am saying is that there are lots of other things to celebrate about people beyond their simply having existed a really long time and generally done what other people do.

Stay tuned next week when we bring you the story of the 74-year-old woman who still has long hair!



By Peter Cantelon

Letter policy

The *Voice* welcomes letters from readers on local and regional issues and concerns.

Please keep your letters short (excessively long letters are less likely to be published), on-topic, and respectful.

The *Voice* reserves the right to edit, condense, or reject any submission.

Please include your full name, address, and phone number for verification purposes. Your name and city will be published with your letter. We do not print anonymous letters.

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Morden council candidates make their pitch for your vote

Two in the running for mayor's seat

By Lorne Stelmach

Morden residents heard from their two candidates for mayor at a Dec. 4 public forum sponsored by the Morden and District Chamber of Commerce.

"I'm running for mayor ... so that I can get the younger generation involved," Nicholas Hoeppner said in his introduction. "Hopefully we can get the younger people involved and get more people involved this year in voting, as everyone's opinions and votes matter."

He referenced a quote by Chilon of Sparta: "If you confer a benefit, never remember it; if you receive one, never forget it."

Hoeppner also expressed gratitude to those residents who have taken time to engage with him through the campaign.

"To those of you who have opened your door to me and have respectfully allowed me into your home, I can never repay you for that ... but I just want you to know you have my deepest gratitude."

"I hope that if I win or Nancy wins that Morden will see a prosperous future and will be able to grow as a community and get it together as a community more than they ever have," he concluded.

"We are a growing community. We must have a strong mayor, a strong council who have a vision for the fu-

ture," said Nancy Penner in her remarks.

"Many decisions we make today will be decisions that will have longterm implications that need to ensure that our growth is sustainable and will meet our needs 15 to 20 years down the road."

She touched on issues and needs ranging from improving infrastructure to advocating for the city on a regional level.

Penner, who was one year into her second term on council when she resigned to run for mayor, cited having a deep understanding of the key issues Morden is facing, like the need for wastewater treatment upgrades, more potable water, expansion of the industrial park, expanding recreational opportunities, adding day care spaces, and maintaining and improving the roads.

"Fiscal responsibility is a high priority ... I will lobby government to ensure infrastructure funding is available for projects beyond our financial capacity," she said.

As well, she noted the experience she has from having served as a central region director for the Association of Manitoba Municipalities, which is pushing for a more secure, longterm funding commitment for municipalities from the province.

"I will work hard to build relationships and to be a regional collaborator. This will include working not only with Winkler and Stanley but with the other municipalities that make up the Pembina Valley."

"I'm dedicated to leading this city



PHOTO BY LORNE STELMACH/VOICE

There are two mayoral candidates and seven councillor candidates running for the vacant seats on Morden city council. Election day is Dec. 20.

into the future," concluded Penner.

The question and answer time kicked off with a question about how the candidates were preparing for the election.

"I think the best way I can prepare is by continuing to go to each and individual house in Morden and continue to talk to the population, as it is their opinion, not mine, that matters, and it is them who make the final decision, not us, because it is them living in the community," said Hoeppner.

"I've been out meeting with different groups for coffee, listening to their concerns. I met with a number of service groups ... meeting with industry leaders and listening to what the city can do to support them. It's been a real eye-opener," said Penner. "I'm just getting out and meeting with the general population in our community."

Both addressed the importance of working with regional partners.

"It's huge that we work with RM of Stanley and City of Winkler and beyond. To be regional collaborators is

so important because many of the issues will take a regional approach," said Penner.

"I think it's important that we collaborate," agreed Hoeppner. "If we're going to make transportation between Morden and Winkler, it will be very important that we collaborate with them."

Another question asked for their thoughts on further increasing taxes if there are cost overruns on major infrastructure projects.

Hoeppner suggested "being able to predict what might happen before we even start the project."

"That's where we lobby government, both federal and provincial, to make sure that those cost overruns can either be funded through government ... or we borrow through debentures," said Penner.

Another resident asked about making Morden attractive for business and industry.

Hoeppner touched on trying to

Continued on page 9

Seven candidates vying for two councillor seats

By Lorne Stelmach

Seven candidates made their pitches last week for one of two vacant councillor seats on Morden city council.

The Dec. 4 forum sponsored by the Morden Chamber allowed the candidates to introduce themselves and then be part of a question and answer session.

"I am passionate about keeping Morden healthy and thriving for this generation and beyond," said Brenda Klassen.

She emphasized three key goals: advocacy, efficiency and transparency.

"Advocacy is something I have practised my whole life," she said, citing a 35 year nursing career as well

as involvement on parent advisory councils and with the Many Hands Resource Centre. "Efficiency can also mean working with regional partnerships to achieve more and faster."

"You can expect transparency [from me] ... clear communication within council and transparency to you, the citizens of Morden," she said. "I promise to listen and to advocate for all members of our community, to work efficiently and transparently as a council member."

"Being a stay-at-home mom in a single income home for the past 16 years has given me a different perspective on life than perhaps a business oriented person might have on what is important to blue collar workers," not-

ed Darlene Wiebe. "I'm very good at asking questions, and this would help bring a well rounded perspective to the discussion table."

She placed particular emphasis on focusing on those things that unite us, such as the most practical needs of the community.

"I want to live in a community that includes all the citizens and puts them first when making decisions on the practical, everyday needs we all have ... focussng on things we have in common and the things we share."

As the owner of Frank+Olive spa in Winkler, Megan Giesbrecht noted it has been a priority for her business to be involved in her community and to support various organizations.

"My only goal when running for council is to see you get involved," she said, citing what she saw as a desire to have someone represent a different demographic of the community.

"There's something to be said about the wisdom that comes with age and experience, but I don't think that we should discount the passion, energy and innovation that comes with youth."

Tracey Krause noted she has the flexibility and spare time as well as the desire to devote herself to the job.

"I've been attending council meetings over the last couple of months,

Continued on page 8



PHOTO BY LORNE STELMACH/VOICE

It was a full house at the Morden Activity Centre last week as the chamber hosted an all-candidates forum ahead of next week's city council by-election.

> FORUM, FROM PG. 7

and I believe that my business and decision-making skills would be put to good use on council," she said.

"I have a deep passion for helping and building community, evidenced by my years working for Many Hands here in Morden," she added. "As a councillor, I would aim to be a voice for the most vulnerable among us including those struggling with poverty, mental health and physical health issues as well as those struggling to feel accepted and included. I don't want Morden to become a bedroom community of our fast-growing neighbour."

Dave Hildebrand cited his business experience in Morden.

"I went from being a carpenter to general contractor, and due to injuries ... I chose to become a developer," he said. "I have 25 years of experience in laying sewer, water, infrastructure," he said. "I want to get in here to save you money, by doing projects the way we used to do them so that our infrastructure lasts longer."

"Morden is worth fighting for ... we don't want to lose it to Winkler. We have a lot to offer, and I want to help promote that, but my first responsibility is cost savings and quality. It is possible."

"I've had many people tell me about the lack of communication on projects that affect them, and I want to serve all Morden and make a difference," said Chris Abrams, who is making his second run for a council seat.

He noted that the wastewater treatment project needs to get done and not be an election issue again next

time.

"The drought we had showed us that we need access to potable water, that we have outgrown our lake, added Abrams, who also cited issues ranging from roads and traffic to public transportation and affordable housing.

"I'm very passionate about my community," he said. "I'm a creative person who looks at things differently and can think outside the box. I'm not afraid to step outside my comfort zone ... I have a compassion for others and I want to be able to be a voice for the under-served residents."

Allan Spearman stressed his experience of having worked with the then town and now city of Morden since 1984.

"I still have a keen interest in how the City of Morden is doing," he said. "I feel that the key issues facing the city right now are infrastructure projects ... the city has experienced rapid growth and expansion over the years, and the challenge for the city is keep the infrastructure in place ahead of time so they can continue this growth."

"We need to get more business into town and get more tax base and create more jobs," he added. "I feel my years of experience ... that I can be an asset to council."

The candidates were asked what they have been doing to prepare for potentially serving on council.

Wiebe referred to meeting with a number of business owners and residents, while Giesbrecht cited having had similar conversations.

Krause has been attending council

meetings as well as talking to business owners and leaders as well as general public.

Hildebrand particularly noted having talked to business owners who left to Winkler as well as being open to hear what anyone has to say about any issues.

Abrams said he has been open to engage with anyone, while Spearman noted talking to city department heads.

"I want to know what the issues are so that I can be effective in this role sooner," said Klassen, who has met with the city manager and current council members and attended council meetings while also having read through the city's parks and urban forestry master plan and affordable housing strategy.

All of the candidates stressed the importance of regional collaboration.

"One of the big issues that we run into is money, and I think that if we can pool a lot of our resources ... we can hopefully find a way to fix a lot of the issues," said Giesbrecht.

"Collaboration between the three is really critical, especially when it comes to huge projects that will need significant amounts of dollars for infrastructure," said Krause.

"Collaboration is essential, especially for our water supply ... we need to work together to secure a good water source ... the way the population is growing, time is not on our side," said Hildebrand.

"There are certain projects [where] it doesn't always work out, so we also have to be prepared to address some of these issues on our own," suggested Abrams.

"The corridor between Morden and Winkler is a definite example ... sooner or later we will be joined together," said Spearman.

"I have learned that collaboration is already happening in the form of monthly meetings ... working collaboratively makes so much sense," said Klassen.

"We need to work on collaborating ... but we need to make sure that Morden is our focus," said Wiebe.

Another question asked for their thoughts on further increasing taxes if there are cost overruns on major infrastructure projects, such as wastewater treatment.

"We can ask the questions to get the feel for what it should cost honestly," said Hildebrand, while Spearman suggested "most large projects like this have contingency funds."

"I hope that we can manage that project diligently so that our cost overruns are not too high," said Klassen, who also cited the need to lobby all levels of government for support.

Krause commented on doing what is necessary to keep the city growing, while Wiebe noted in terms of budgeting that "when one goes over, you've got to look at where you can cut back somewhere else ... there also always needs to be a contingency."

Another resident asked about making Morden attractive for business and industry.

Abrams said the Morden Community Development Corporation (MCDC) has worked well for Morden and should continue to get strong support.

"I want to highlight success stories ... and we do need to increase our industrial park," said Klassen, who added economic development officer Jason Dyck is doing great work for the city.

Wiebe stressed the need for the infrastructure in order for Morden to continue growing, while Krause also cited highlighting more of the success stories and supporting the MCDC. Hildebrand also highlighted how MCDC had done mentoring of new business people.

Finally, two questions focused on not only attracting immigrants here but also supporting them in getting established. All of the candidates offered similar responses around the need to do more to support them.

"It is not enough to say, 'Hey, congratulations on opening your business' and then never set foot in their business," said Giesbrecht.

"I really appreciate the energy and enthusiasm that our newcomers bring to Morden," said Krause. "Sometimes there's a lack of understanding around the strengths and weaknesses and threats and opportunities that exist here in Morden."

Hildebrand recalled that, as a business owner, he always strived to support other local firms, while Abrams noted Community Futures Heartland offers a range of programs and supports for entrepreneurs.

"It makes me sad that newcomers have come and tried and left," said Klassen. "I think we, as a community, need to find more ways to celebrate these new businesses and support them, not just by our words but by our actions."

getinformed



PHOTOS BY ASHLEIGH VIVEIROS/VOICE

The South Central Regional Library teamed up with Winkler Arts and Culture to put on a Book & Art Sale at the Park St. gallery last weekend. The partnership meant that in addition to the used books and other materials the library offers at its pop-up sales across the region, this sale also included work from local artists like Mary Fehr (right), who was on hand to demonstrate her craft.

Book and Art Sale at Winkler Arts & Culture



Discovery Trails track, soccer field campaign at \$760k and counting

By Lorne Stelmach

The fundraising drive for a track and soccer field as part of the École Discovery Trails project in Morden is setting its sights on its next target.

The campaign has been working this fall with the Morden Area Foundation, which made a commitment to match the first \$25,000 raised from mid-October to Dec. 15.

As of last Thursday, the fundraising had surpassed the \$25,000 threshold for the matching MAF grant, so it turned into \$51,000.

"We're just blown away by the support of the community," said Dave Guenther, a trustee with Western School Division who has been helping spearhead the campaign. "You go into these things having a good idea but not knowing if everyone else will be on board ... certainly Morden has spoken and agreed that this is a project that benefits everyone."

"It's great news. We're so grateful to the community, and it feels like they are really celebrating with us and gathering around this project with their support."

Meeting the foundation target of course doesn't bring the fundraising

to an end, as the overall campaign continues on now with the \$1 million mark in mind.

"It's the first kind of sprint in our public outreach for supporting this project ... so it's really moving from a sprint to a marathon now," said Guenther. "On top of all the previous fundraising that's occurred, we're now up to \$760,000 in donations and pledges."

"A million dollars pays for the entire facility portion of the project. Then after that we can start adding equip-

ment like hurdles, starting blocks, timing equipment, scoreboards and possibly lighting. So all the extras that will put it over the top is past the million dollar mark," he explained. "It's totally doable ... we're at the point now where we've raised enough that the entire track portion is paid for, and the next phase will be the soccer field."

You can learn more and make a donation online at www.discoverytrack.ca or the GoFundMe campaign at www.gofundme.com/f/discovery-track.

track.

Guenther said excitement is building over the prospect of having an Olympic-sized facility for Morden.

"It's going to be a world-class facility right here," he said. "I feel that raising funds for this project through community support really makes it ours as a community, and we'll be able to be showing so much hospitality when we start inviting neighbours to come compete and participate with us here."

> MAYORAL CANDIDATES, FROM PG. 7

draw more on the young population, as it can be hard for them to get their start.

"I think we already are an appealing place for business and industry," said Penner, who also emphasized having the infrastructure in place to attract business. "We can't talk tax incentives, but we can talk ways that make Morden an attractive place to build."

They were also asked about easing the burden on residential taxpayers. Penner commented on growing and diversifying our commercial and in-

dustrial base, while Hoeppner wondered about allowing the taxpayers more direct say, particularly in relation to major projects.

Finally, two questions focused on attracting and keeping immigrants here and the difficulties they face in getting established and being supported.

"I think the most important thing that I can bring to the table for getting immigrants or wanting them to come to Morden is my ability to understand their culture and want to learn their culture," said Hoeppner,

who also noted the challenge of getting "the acceptance of the community ... we might be friendly, but if we don't accept these businesses, we can't have businesses grow here."

Penner suggested we are generally seen as being a welcoming community but also emphasized that "as a community, we have to support local, we have to shop local ... we just have to realize we need to support our local people. That's the challenge to our community."

Morden heads to the polls Dec. 20.

Gr. 2 students hosting fundraising sale Dec. 20

By Lorne Stelmach

A fundraising garage sale has become a holiday season tradition for Grade 2 students at Maple Leaf School.

It has been organized annually for a number of years now by the class of teacher Jennifer Stein. The project is not only a learning experience for the students but also a chance for them to give something back to the community.

"This has been a project that covers many areas of different academics that we touch on," Stein said last week as her students prepared for the sale that will take place all day Dec. 20 in the school gym. "It's all project based learning ... this is one way that I introduce it to my students in Grade 2."

"We actually have been working also with our math coach, so we have really integrated it into our math instruction as well," she added.

"We've been learning how to do posters attractive and easy to read ... we've been counting money, learning how to make change. We've had to write letters to the local businesses as well, asking for the auction prizes, and they deliver the letters and talk to the managers."

The garage sale was first done in 2009 after Stein had noted that École Morden Middle School had done something similar.

It raised over \$1,100 in 2018 and just over \$1,300 in 2019 before then being delayed by the pandemic. Overall, it has brought in \$7,758.60 to date.

Every year it supports the Morden Christmas Cheer Board with half of the proceeds. The other half goes to a charitable cause chosen by the students. Past recipients have included the Ladybug Foundation and an overseas mission, though the focus is often on local organizations.

"We will be donating the money we raised [this year] to Morden Christmas Cheer and the Pembina Valley Humane Society because we would like to help the people and animals in Morden," said student Ernest Abrenica, who was part of giving details of the project to the media along with Georgia MacAulay, Daniel David, Max Prokopowich, Ainsley Noseworthy, Athena Constantino, and Aymen Mansouri.

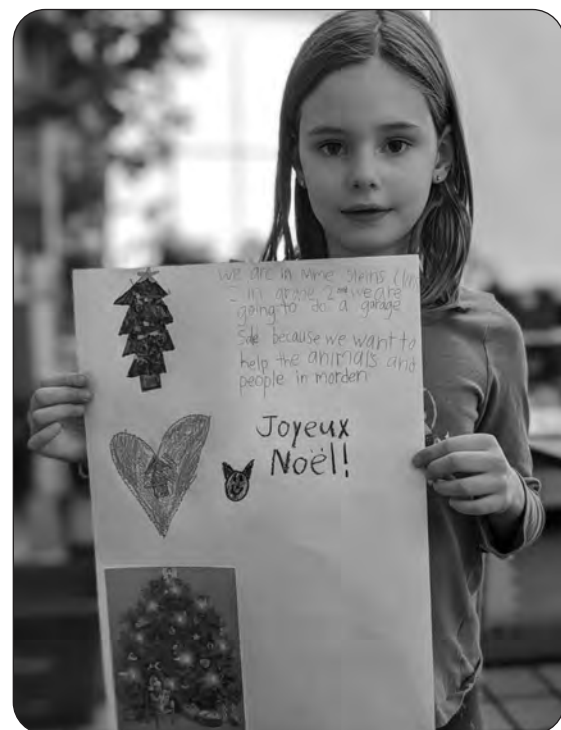
Stein noted they encourage the community to get involved and support the sale.

"The goal of our sale is also to give all students the opportunity to purchase gifts for their family. It is also a great way to share our traditions and culture with our newcomers," she said.

"Everything will be sold for \$2 or less. All students will decorate their own gift bags to be used to wrap the gifts too. These bags have been donated by Giant Tiger."



Above: Maple Leaf School Gr. 2 students Devi Berard and Ainsley Noseworthy with some of the items that have been donated for the upcoming fundraising garage sale. Right: Lexi Friesen with a poster advertising the event, which takes place at the school Dec. 20.



Stein also noted that this will be the last year for the garage sale at Maple Leaf School due to the coming transition to the new École Discovery Trails.

"Because the French Immersion program is moving to the new school, this is the last sale we will be doing at Maple Leaf, so I'm hoping to make it extra special."

PHAC hosts holiday arts & craft sale



PHOTOS BY LORNE STELMACH/VOICE

The winter storm last week may have kept a few vendors and some customers away, but the annual holiday arts and crafts sale of the Pembina Hills Arts Council still drew people to the Access Event Centre Saturday. Around 30 vendors from across the region were in attendance with a wide variety of handmade creations.

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Glow in the Country

Winkler Bible Camp's Glow in the Country served up a by-donation meal along with a feast of holiday lights last week. You can check out the light displays through to the end of this weekend by heading to christmasglowinthecountry.com to book a time slot. Entry proceeds go towards camp programming.

PHOTOS BY LORNE STELMACH/VOICE



SUPPLIED PHOTO

Altona Hospital scales back on ER hours

By Lori Penner

Southern Health-Santé Sud recently changed the hours of

operation for the emergency department at the Altona Community Memorial Health Centre.

As of Dec. 8, the ER is open from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. seven days a week, including stat holidays.

The RHA is asking the public to continue to help manage the stress put on the department

by only using it during the designated hours for the purpose it was designed for, which is to manage acute and serious health care needs.

All less serious health care needs should be addressed through the Altona Clinic or other clinics in the surrounding area.

Southern Health-Santé Sud Chief Medical

Officer Dr. Denis Fortier says the reduction in emergency hours is largely due to the challenges in health human resources.

"Previously we had some challenges in our nursing resources. Currently, and for a while now, we've been experiencing challenges with physician health human resources in Altona, but also throughout the region and in fact throughout the province."

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The Santa truck is back

By Lorne Stelmach

Even though it only started in 2021 in the midst of the pandemic, the Santa truck is almost already a Christmas tradition in Morden.

Dale Maksymic and his son Dylan have come to realize people expect to see them on the road, and they look forward to it.

"It's heartwarming for us ... and if there's a need for it, we will do it," Dale said last week after the Santa

truck had its first weekend out in the community. "Especially for the kids, it's very important ... it's seeing the joy; not just kids, even seeing adults who see us, and they open the door and wave ... so it's just a joy to do it."

"Every year now we're asked, 'Are you guys doing it? When are you doing it?'" said Dylan.

"I love doing it. It definitely takes time to get the truck ready. Every

Continued on page 14

Dale and Dylan Maksymic are excited to bring Santa to the streets of Morden this holiday season. They'll be driving their Santa Truck around town the next few weeks.

PHOTO
BY LORNE STELMACH/VOICE



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Voice

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> **SANTA TRUCK, FROM PG. 13**

year, it's almost the same obviously for the setup, but we do try to do a little something different every year.

"To me, the time doesn't bother me because I enjoy doing it."

The Santa truck came about as a plan B for Dylan, who had planned to do a Santa Claus parade in 2021 but ended up having to cancel it due the restrictions at the time.

"So then we started this instead ... we did the Santa truck and had pictures with Santa at the house as well. Now this year we're just doing the Santa truck."

It was simply just a way to help raise people's spirits.

"We went out that first year as a trial run, and everybody loved it. It was all over social media and out in the community, people were talking about it, so we've continued

on from there, and we enjoy doing it," said Dylan.

"It's really just to lift people's spirits. For some people, Christmas time is a hard time," he continued. "So we go out and have our music playing, and Santa is there.

"We enjoy seeing the people from their windows, or the kids are running outside. It brightens our spirits as well."

For Dale, playing Santa is a family tradition that goes back to his grandfather. Dale's mother at about age five was thought to not have long to live.

"So my grandfather took it upon himself because he wanted her to see Santa Claus before she died. So he played Santa Claus for her that year, and she ended up living until age 65, so he ended up playing Santa Claus for another 35 years after that," he said.

"So for me, it's very special to me because I grew up with it, and just to carry on with it is meaningful to me. It's definitely in my blood, and it's something I very much look forward to now."

If you want to keep tabs on when they are going out and where, keep an eye on "The Santa Truck" Facebook page.

They'll be out most weekends and possibly a few weekdays leading up to Christmas.

People are also invited to check out the Maksymic's holiday lights display at 145 Conner Hill Drive.

"It can be crazy, the traffic that we get every year. I think this is the third year for the yard as well," said Dylan.

"Any way that we can spread joy for people, that's what we want to do," said Dale.



Wishing you and your loved ones a very

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by *Winkler Morden*

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One more weekend for Winkler Christmas Market

The Winkler Christmas Market is back for another year at the New Leaf Garden Center, providing a venue for local makers—like artist Mary Reddecopp (left)—to sell their wares this holiday season. The market also includes live music (left, below), refreshments for sale, and a chance to chat and have your photo taken with Santa Claus. It runs for one final weekend this Friday (12-9 p.m.) and Saturday (9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.). You can check out the list of vendors online at newleafgardencenter.ca/christmas-market.

PHOTOS BY ASHLEIGH VIVEIROS/
VOICE



*Wishing you every happiness this
Holiday Season!*

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PHOTOS BY LORNE STELMACH/VOICE

St. Paul's United Church's cookie walk combined with proceeds from a series of soup and pie suppers is expected to have raised over \$4,500 for local non-profits this year.

Cookie walk raises funds for local charities

By Lorne Stelmach

A great selection of baked treats were available Friday at St. Paul's United Church in Morden for the annual cookie walk fundraiser.

The event has been happening for years now, aside from during the pandemic, and it has become a popular event for volunteers and customers alike.

"Over the course of the year we run many soup and pie days, but we don't do it in December; we do this cookie walk instead," said Edith Lovatt, who is one of the co-ordinators.

"We're raising money for local charities," she explained. "So all the funds go to local charities like Genesis House, Christmas Cheer, Many Hands or Boundary Trails [Health Centre Foundation]. It stays in our area, and ones like those that tend to

be the ones we give to each year."

The expenses for the cookie walk are very minimal because all the cookies have been donated. This year there were about 40 bakers who contributed goodies.

The cookie walk on average brings in about \$800, and Lovatt estimated the total combined with the soup and pie events will be about \$4,500.

A committee of eight people will meet to decide on the recipients and how much to donate to each.

"We often say this is also more about community than it is about the money that we're making," said Lovatt. "Especially at the soup and pie days, people will sit around for an hour after they've eaten and just visit."

"It feels very good. I think our church is known for its heart for giving out."

We feel blessed to enjoy the gifts of friendship and goodwill from kind customers and friends like you all year round, but especially during this time of year. We sincerely appreciate your support!

We wish you and yours all the very best this holiday season.

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> MEAL IDEA



Hickory Smoked Spiral Sliced Ham with Bourbon, Honey and Orange Glaze

Total time: 2 hours, 40 minutes
1 Smithfield Hickory Smoked Spiral Sliced Ham
1/2 cup bourbon

1/2 cup honey
1 1/2 cups fresh orange juice
1/2 cup brown sugar
1/2 teaspoon ground clove
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1 tablespoon ground ginger
Preheat oven to 325 F.

Remove packaging from ham, including glaze packet, and place face down in large roasting pan.

Heat ham, uncovered, 12-14 minutes per pound, or until internal temperature reaches 120 F. Heating time will vary by weight.

When about 30 minutes of cook

time remains, in small saucepan over medium-high heat, whisk bourbon, honey, orange juice, brown sugar, clove, cinnamon and ginger; bring to boil.

Pour glaze over ham.

Continue baking ham, basting frequently.

For final 10 minutes of cook time, turn oven up to 425 F, continuing to baste with glaze.

When ham is heated through, remove from oven, drain liquid in bottom of baking dish and reserve to serve on side of hot ham.

Inspiring ideas for last-minute holiday shoppers



It's unlikely that anyone aspires to be a last-minute holiday shopper. Putting off holiday shopping until the last minute can make for a stressful home stretch to the season, and there's no guarantee store shelves won't already be picked clean or that gifts purchased online will arrive on time.

Despite how unappealing last-minute shopping can be, it's still a fact of life for millions of holiday shoppers. As the clock winds down this holiday season, shoppers can look to these ideas for inspiration.

- **Gift cards:** Gift cards may never earn a distinction as the most sentimental item to give a loved one during the holiday season, but they are surprisingly sought-after. In fact, a survey from the National Retail Federation found that 54 percent of participants identified gift cards as the most-wanted gift of the 2022 holiday season. Chain retailers, small businesses and restaurants are among the many establishments that sell gift cards, so shoppers are bound to find a card to please anyone on their shopping list.

- **Food/beverage:** The holiday season is a popular time to indulge in some great food and wash it down with a favorite wine or another adult beverage. That makes food and beverages a great holiday gift. Shoppers can take a loved one out to a favorite restaurant, prepare a homemade treat or purchase a favorite dish from a local specialty grocery store or eatery. Pair the food with an appropriate beverage and this accessible last-minute gift idea is sure to be a hit.



- **Tickets:** Tickets to a movie, sporting event, live theater performance, or concert are another gift idea that likely won't be gobbled up by early bird shoppers. People of all ages enjoy experiences, and a 2022 survey from the travel booking platform GetYourGuide found that 50 percent of survey respondents indicated they would enjoy tickets to a concert or show.

- **Books:** Books make an ideal holiday gift for everyone from young kids to grandparents. Traditional print books are small enough that they can likely arrive on time even if they're purchased just a few days before Christmas. E-book sellers enable gift givers to pick the perfect time to notify loved ones they have received an electronic book. Audiobooks, which can be downloaded to a smartphone or given as a CD, make an ideal gift for loved ones who spend a lot of time behind the wheel.

Last-minute holiday shopping can be stressful. However, various sought-after items can be secured at the last minute, ensuring gift givers' loved ones have a happy holiday season.



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WORK & WESTERN WEARHOUSE

Community picks its Light Up Morden winners



By Lorne Stelmach

Four Morden homes were honoured this past weekend for their efforts to show their Christmas spirit.

The winners of the Light Up Morden contest were presented with gift baskets at the holiday craft sale hosted by the Pembina Hills Arts Council Saturday.

The arts council teamed up with the City of Morden on the promotion which had residents vote for the best seasonal lighting displays posted to social media.

"This year we liked that we put it back to the community to tell us who the winners are ... I think that was good," said Lili Krushel, events co-ordinator for the City of Morden. "The first place was the clear winner."

The top prize for most votes went to Mignon Manzanillo for her family's outside decorations at 221 3rd St. as well as an indoor Christmas village display.

"We've been big on Christmas, ever since I was a kid," she said.

"My husband actually did it; it was just me telling him I want this and I want this," Manzanillo said with a

laugh. "We always make sure our house is very lively every Christmas. We will do it every year."

Second place went to the home of Dennis and Debbie Korne at 353 12th Street. They are well known for their extensive annual display.

"I waited a long time to be able to put on such a beautiful display ... in Winnipeg, we just didn't have the yard or the time. We were raising kids back then," said Debbie.

"Now, it just seems to keep growing every year, and I think it brings a lot of joy to the community, and that's how we give back," she said. "It's my vision and Dennis's hard work."

Third place went to Dylan Maksymic, whose home at 145 Conner Hill is also a frequent must-see for people wanting to tour light displays in Morden.

"We do it to cheer people up, give them something to look at and enjoy. It's more of a novelty thing for us, not the competition," said Dylan's father Dale, who also teams up with his son for the annual Santa truck that tours the community.

"We just enjoy it. It's something that started about five years ago, and we've carried on with it. It seems to



SUPPLIED PHOTOS

Four houses were awarded prizes in the 2023 Light Up Morden holiday decorating contest last weekend. Clockwise from left: 221 3rd St., 353 12 St., 145 Connor Hill Drive, and 302 12th St. Below, left: The winners with their prize packages.



get a little bigger every year," he said. "We just want to spread some cheer the best that we can ... we don't mind doing the work at all."

Another prize went out to Darla Henderson at 302 12th Street for being the most popular viewed house on the various social media platforms.

"I love Christmas, and I want to bring that out to the community," said Henderson.

"My children love to participate, so my youngest actually is the one who motivates me to get going on it every year.

"We make sure that we have it done, not before Remembrance Day but soon after," she said. "It brings the

kid out in me, and it's just a fun thing to do."

Pembina Hills Arts Council director Liza Isakov was pleased with the response.

"I think we had a good number of people registering and showcasing their homes and just brightening up the community," she said.

"It was fun to look through it all and get to know people and see how it brings joy to them and to the community," she said. "It's a lot of hard work, and they're not doing it for the prizes, they're doing it just to bring joy to everyone."

Check out the Voice online at www.winklermordenvoice.ca or altonavoice.ca

arts&culture

WA+C show encourages you to remember the good times

By Ashleigh Viveiros

This month's feature exhibit at Winkler Arts and Culture encourages viewers to find the joy in life, even amidst hard times.

Altona artist Olga Krahn's *Remember When...* show features two dozen acrylic paintings the artist hopes will get you thinking positive thoughts.

"Rather than remembering the bad things, it's about trying to remember the good things," Krahn says, explaining the pieces she selected for the show run the gamut from beautiful landscapes to blossoming flowers to cute animals. "I'm hoping that people will see that there is still joy in life, even through hardships.

"I know what hardships are," she says. "How do you get over them? How do you get through them? I'm trying to do it with colour, to inspire and uplift people. It's a reminder of the good things in life."

It was personal hardship that brought Krahn back to art many years

ago.

"I lost a loved one, and then the most important thing to me at the time was friendships," she shares. As she healed, leaning on friends for support, she was encouraged to pick up the paintbrush she'd put down years earlier. She came to find a measure of solace in the act of creating and in observing the beauty in the world.

"And that's what I'm hoping that other people will find too," Krahn says.

She finds inspiration for her paintings all around her.

"I often take my little doggy for a walk, and then things come to my mind of what I would like to paint," she says. "Or I'll think about it in the middle of the night and the whole thing will come to me in a dream ... as long as I can remember the next morning."

There are a few pieces in the show Krahn feels a special connection to.

"There's one landscape of a farmyard. That is most special to me be-



SUPPLIED PHOTO

Altona artist Olga Krahn's paintings are on display at Winkler Arts and Culture this month.

cause that's where my late husband grew up, and I lived there for a little duration of time after we were married," she says. "So it creates a memory for me."

Another piece featuring pairs of feet has a bit of symbolism behind it.

"It illustrates getting along with others, being kind," Krahn explains, adding it also is meant to depict multi-generational cooperation.

Remember When... is on display at the Park St. gallery until Dec. 29.



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

The Kenmor Classic Players of Candlewick Productions brought a classic courtroom drama to the Kenmor Theatre this past weekend. The play *12 Angry Men* is a 1950s drama that revolves around a young man whose life is in the hands of the jury as they deliberate whether he is guilty or not. "The cast and crew did a fantastic job. We had some superb acting," said director Richard Klassen.

12 Angry Men a hit at the Kenmor



The Voice

What's Your story?

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Local author releases new book

By Lorne Stelmach

A local writer, artist, and musician has released another addition to what he sees becoming an extended series of connected young adult fantasy books.

About a year after his release of *Moki and the Erased Ones*, Joel Grey has now published part one of a prequel novel to the Harnessing Chaos series called *Children of the Crimson Insurrection*.

It came about in a similar way to the first book, which arose from having originally penned a few short stories set in the world of Harnessing Chaos in 2014.

Grey then penned both the first book in the series and this latest installment as part of the National Novel Writing Month challenge, which encourages writers to write 50,000 words in November.

"I had wanted to kind of explore a little bit of the areas of this world that I created," said Grey. "Halfway through the month, I had already hit the 50,000 word count goal, and I realized I had quite a bit more of the story that I still wanted to tell. So I split it up into part one and part two, and I'm planning on having part two published in early 2024."

Moki and the Erased Ones was centred around the only blue-haired Y'nari in

a repressive culture that fetishizes racial purity.

Set just before the events of *Moki*, *Children of the Crimson Insurrection* is a standalone prequel that introduces the island nation of the Azai.

Historically neutral, the Azai are invaded in a sneak attack ahead of the Imperium's war against Aq'Adez. Kerosi, a young scribe at the Azai Grand Library, survives the invasion and occupation of the island and escapes to the mainland. She quickly becomes entangled within a web of intrigue that has dark consequences for the entire region.

Kerosi, the young Azai scribe, is only one of central characters of the story, which involves a complex world and characters, so a prequel can help flesh it all out more, he suggested.

"While the two parts are a single standalone story, they contain many 'Easter eggs' which fans of the series will appreciate and gives greater context to characters and events that come later," said Grey.

"It gives a little more context to some things that happen later on in the story, but you also don't need an existing knowledge of the series to understand and appreciate this story ... for people are fans of the series, it will be engaging because you'll recognize some of the locations and get



SUPPLIED PHOTOS

Writer/artist Joel Grey has released another novel in his Harnessing Chaos series: *Children of the Crimson Insurrection Part 1*.

a deeper understanding of the characters and places."

Grey said further exploring the island nation of the Azai and the red coast of Aq'Adez has been a wonderful experience for him as a writer.

"This area of Te'a has not been prominently featured yet within the Harnessing Chaos series. I'm very excited to share this new region of the world with fans of the series. It's so rich in lore and contains many unique and fascinating creatures and locales.

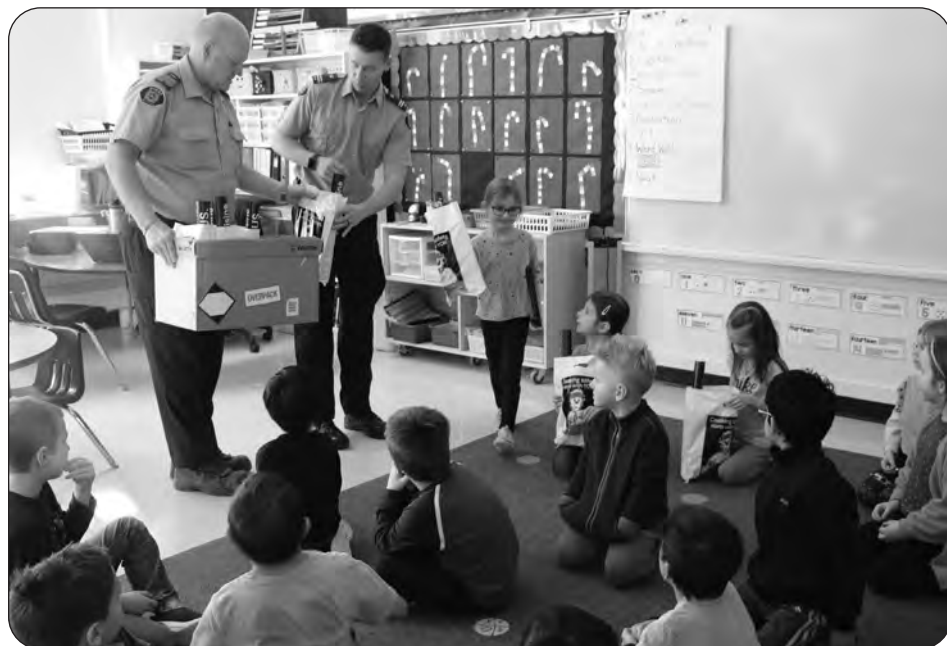
"I've spent so many years building

up the lore and the way the world works that I've come to a point where the stories almost write themselves," he added.

"I'm very happy with it. It kind of exceeded my expectations of what I had kind of started out with," Grey concluded. "It started filling out and expanding in the most wonderful way."

Children of the Crimson Insurrection: Part 1 is available now in paperback from Amazon books or from the website at HarnessingChaos.ca.

Maple Leaf student wins provincial fire safety contest



PHOTOS BY LORNE STELMACH/VOICE

A Morden student was the lucky winner in a province-wide fire safety contest this fall. Morden Fire and Rescue rep Jonathan Baumgart (left) presented the Gr. 1 prize last week to Oakley Carson at Maple Leaf School, and she was able to distribute prizes to her classmates (above). The contest was held as part of National Fire Prevention Week in October. It asked students to submit a fire escape plan. Morden has had at least four winners in recent years, including two in a row. "It shows the commitment of our schools and our teachers locally to fire safety and actually taking the time and initiative to put in their fire escape plan," said Baumgart.

Elks raffle raises funds for BTHC

By Lorne Stelmach

An annual fundraising raffle of the Morden Elks Lodge is supporting the Boundary Trails Health Centre this year.

The club held its Cash Is King raffle draw Friday at the Morden Legion, and three lucky winners are sharing a portion of the \$15,000 in prize money.

The first prize of \$10,000 went to Allan Halstead, while the second prize of \$3,000 went to Riley Maddock and the third prize of \$2,000 went to Mike Duncan.

The club sells 300 tickets at \$100 each, so the other \$15,000 is put back into the com-

munity. The organization has been running the annual raffle for over a decade.

"We've now put well over \$150,000 into various projects in and around Morden," said club member Rob Dudgeon.

"Something like this lottery, I'm not going to say its effortless, but it's easy for the club to do it. It's been a good project for us."

PHOTO BY LORNE STELMACH/VOICE
Morden Elks member Rob Dudgeon prepares to pull the winning tickets in the group's Cash Is King raffle last week.



> HEALTH CARE STAFFING SHORTAGES, FROM PG. 12

He adds that this is a provincial issue that is affecting all rural centres.

"The last time we checked, we had 24 physician vacancies in our region, and we required up to an additional 21 physicians to make up for the increase in population and demands. So, we are about 45 physicians short for our entire region, and so that impacts many communities, including Altona."

He says the issue has been slowly growing, with the pandemic being a large driving factor in the shortages in every sector of the health system.

"I don't think we've ever experienced this type of challenge in Southern Health-Santé Sud as we are currently facing."

If you get sick after hours in Altona, you'll have to look at other options. According to Fortier, some of those include reassessing just how sick you are, and whether you might be able to see your physician the following day.

It also involves potentially heading to other emergency departments, such as Boundary Trails Health Centre.

"There are also a number of virtual care options that are being presented into the health system now," he added.

Fortier noted that Altona is not unique in this situation.

"We have had to reduce hours of operation in the emergency departments in pretty much all our community hospitals across the region over the last couple of years. We're really hoping this is temporary and we have plans to expand once the human resource challenges resolve."

He says about 80 to 85 per cent of all people who visit the emergency department do so during those hours between 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

"So, we are going to miss some who come to the emergency department primarily from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. Once

we get beyond 8 p.m., the traffic in the emergency departments reduces significantly. We try to target the times of the day where we can maximize the benefits of having the emergency department open, even if it is reduced."

December is adding to the challenge, especially with people not being available.

"We are hopeful and optimistic that we will return to the previous hours of eight hours Monday to Thursday, and 12 hours of operation on Friday, Saturday and Sunday in January 2024," Fortier said.

Meanwhile, he says Southern Health Santé-Sud has been beating the bushes looking for family physicians, but so is everybody else.

"We are in extreme competition with every community in this province, and every province in this country. But we are doing what we can. There are a number of different projects going on to try to find physicians."

Some of those projects include sponsoring internationally trained physicians to get extra training to become oriented and familiar in the Canadian system and the Manitoba Health system.

"That takes about a year, and there's costs related to that," Fortier noted. "We sponsor three on average every year. This year, we saw this coming, so we sponsored six, and they'll be coming out of the program in August and September 2024."

When there are no physicians to find, they have to wait for the graduating classes in the summer.

They also lean on an organization called Canadian Health Labs for recruiting doctors near and far.

"They've been contracted to find 150 family doctors for Manitoba, of which 15 are designated for Southern Health," Fortier said, adding the RHA is also working with provincial recruiters who attend career fairs

throughout the province and country.

Last September in Steinbach, the RHA hosted 100 family medicine residents from the University of Manitoba and highlighted the opportunities, and the reasons people should choose to work in rural Manitoba.

"The university is increasing the number of family physicians that are being trained and the number of internationally trained physicians that can go through the program, so they're going from 20 a year to 30 a year," Fortier said.

For the international training positions, if it all falls into place, within the next couple of years, they will have gone from training 100 doctors to 140 to 150 a year.

"That doesn't guarantee that these doctors end up becoming family doctors or want to work in rural Manito-

ba. But it's still better than before."

But these are very long term and slow processes, Fortier acknowledges.

"There's not a lot of answers today, unfortunately. What we need to do today is protect the physicians that are currently working so that we don't crush them under the weight of all the duties and responsibilities that are put upon them. We have to be careful to protect their health and their ability to offer services. One of those things is occasionally reducing the hours of operation in the emergency department so they can catch their breath."

Fortier thanks communities for their patience and understanding.

"We're trying to balance the needs of the population but also the needs of the people who provide service, and it's not always easy."

The Funnies

PLANET GARRY

By: Harrison Groll
Inspired By: Bill Watterson



sports & recreation

Flyers down Wolverines, Stampeder

By Ashleigh Viveiros

It was a winning week for the Winkler Flyers in Manitoba Junior Hockey League action.

Winkler came home from their game in Waywayseecappo against the Wolverines with a 5-2 win last Wednesday night.

The team massively outshot their opponents 50-15, with Nich McKee finding the back of the net in the first period, Trent Penner, Spencer Shugrue, and Noah Diemer making it 4-2 in the second, and Zach Nicholas finishing things off in the third. Liam Ernst made 13 saves in net.

Back in Winkler Sunday night, the Flyers came out ahead against the Swan Valley Stampeder 6-2.

There was a bit of back and forth in the first two periods, Swan Valley taking a 1-0 lead six minutes in only to have Penner even things out with Winkler's first goal a minute later.

The Stampeder pulled ahead again early in the middle frame, but goals from Nicholas and Avery Anderson gave Winkler the lead 3-2 heading into the final period.

There, Tanner George, Brody Beauchemin, and Penner all scored to put an end to the Stampeder's hopes of catching back up.

The shots on net tally was another



PHOTO BY RICK HIEBERT/VOICE

In his first game in a Flyers uniform, Jakob Jones recorded three assists en route to a 6-2 win over the Swan Valley Stampeder Sunday in Winkler.

er lopsided affair: 50-19 for Winkler, with Malachi Klassen in net this time making 17 saves.

Winkler is in third place in the MGEU East Division standings with

a record of 19-3-1-1 and 40 points, one point shy of the Portage Terriers in second place and three behind the Steinbach Pistons in first, though with several games in hand over those two

teams.

This week, Winkler hosts OCN Tuesday night and then travels to play in Niverville Friday before returning home to host Dauphin on Saturday.

Male Hawks best Bruins, fall to Thrashers

By Lorne Stelmach

The male U18 Pembina Valley Hawks picked up three of a possible four points this past week.

The Hawks first came up with a big 4-1 win over the fourth-place Winnipeg Bruins last Wednesday in Morden.

Then, after their Friday game in Brandon against the Wheat Kings was postponed due to the weather,

the Hawks battled the Thrashers to overtime Saturday in Winnipeg before falling 4-3.

The Hawks connected for a pair of powerplay goals against the Bruins as they took period leads of 1-0 and 2-1 before putting the game away with two more in the third.

Scoring for Pembina Valley were Cohen Pilkington, Sam Delaquis, Adrien McIntosh, and Jaxon Hildebrand. Bryson Yaschyshyn made 31 saves.

The shots on goal was 32-29 in Winnipeg's favour.

The Thrashers on Sunday led Pembina Valley 2-1 after one period and then led 3-2 early in the third before Sam Delaquis connected for the Hawks to force overtime, where the Thrashers won it 31 seconds in.

Also scoring for Pembina Valley were Pilkington and Kam Thomas, while Ryler Gates made 31 saves off the 35 shots on goal he faced. His

teammates fired 42 the other way.

The Hawks sit in seventh place at 8-9-2-3 for 21 points, which has them one up on Eastman and four behind the Thrashers. Parkland and Norman are also just two and three points behind Pembina Valley.

The Hawks head to Dauphin this weekend for a pair of games Saturday and Sunday against the Parkland Rangers.

Maroons beat Royals in OT

By Ashleigh Viveiros

The Altona Maroons added a second win to their record in the SEMHL with an overtime victory against the visiting Winkler Royals last week.

The Maroons came from behind to force overtime. Winkler had scored first in the opening frame (courtesy of Remi Laurencelle) but Altona responded in kind a minute later (Geordie Keane).

Second and third-period goals from Phil Letkeman and Aaron Lewadniuk (with two) made it 4-1 for the visitors before Altona's Haydon Friesen began chipping away at that lead.

Keane scored his second of the night midway through the final period and then one more for the Maroons from Adam Henry tied things up.

Robert Guimond got the game-winner for Altona 1:48 into overtime.

The Maroons outshot the Royals 51-48. Cole Kehler made 44 saves in net for the Maroons while Jayme Janzen stopped 46 across the rink for the

Royals.

The two teams will get a rematch in Winkler on Saturday, Dec. 23 to close out 2023.

Elsewhere in the league, the Morden Bombers fell at the hands of the visiting Ste. Anna Aces Thursday night.

Scoring for the home team was Jory Mullin (with two) and Mike Rey. Reed Peters made a valiant effort in net, saving 50 shots as the Aces won the shots battle 57-27.

The Red River Wild also lost their game for the week, falling to the Portage Islanders 4-1 last Wednesday night. Justin Baudry scored for the Wild and goalie Mark Friesen made 27 saves as Red River outshot Portage 39-31.

With that, Ste. Anne (16 points), Warren (14 points) and Red River (12 points, 6-2 record) have a firm hold on the top of the SEMHL standings.

Morden is in sixth place with eight points and a 3-4-0-2 record, Winkler is in seventh with eight points and 3-5-1-1, and Altona is in tenth and last



PHOTO BY EDWARD VINCENT ARCENAL/VOICE

The Altona Maroons and the Winkler Royals battled to a 4-4 tie in regulation last Thursday night before the Maroons won it in overtime.

place at 2-7 and four points.

Coming up this week, on Wednesday Winkler hosts Warren and Altona is in Ste. Anne, on Thursday Morden

is in Carman, and on Sunday Red River hosts Winkler and Morden hosts Warren.

PV Twisters on three-game winning streak

By Ty Dilello

The Pembina Valley Twisters have won their third straight game with a pair of wins this past week. With the victories, the Twisters now move into fifth place in the MMJHL's standings with a record of 11-8-2.

The Twisters defeated the Transcona Railer Express 6-3 at home on Dec. 8. Merek Degraeve led the charge for Pembina Valley with a pair of goals, while Riley Goertzen, Mark Plett, Mike Heppner and Max Collet had the other Twisters' tallies. Logan Enns stopped 47 shots in the net for the win.

A few nights later, the Twisters blasted the St. Boniface Riels by a 6-2 count on the road on Dec. 10. Alex VanDeynze had a hat trick, while his brother Kyle VanDeynze also scored for Pembina Valley. Degraeve and Derek Wiebe scored other Twisters' goals on the night. Enns was fantastic again in the Twisters' net, stopping 36 shots for the win.

"We played hard in our end and

capitalized in the offensive zone by working the puck deep. Our power-play came through big at key times in the game, gaining us more momentum," said Pembina Valley Twisters' head coach Braeden Beernaerts. "To be a top contender in the league, we are finding out that on-ice consistency

starts with coming to the rink prepared before each game, day in and day out, regardless of the standings."

Twisters' sniper Wiebe is currently third in the MMJHL's scoring race with 37 points in 21 games and Degraeve is in eighth with 31 points in 21 games. Enns is sitting fourth in the

goalie rankings, boasting a 3.21 goals-against average and a .910 save percentage.

The Twisters are back in action with a home game on Dec. 15 at the Morris Multiplex against the Stonewall Jets. The puck drops at 8 p.m.

Female Hawks still looking for a break

By Lorne Stelmach

It is now 12 games without a win for the female U18 Pembina Valley Hawks.

As it has often been through the losing streak, the Hawks were not far off from breaking the streak, as they only lost 5-3 Saturday to the first-place Winnipeg Ice.

Sunday though was a different story as Pembina Valley was blanked 7-0 by the fourth-place Eastman Selects.

The Hawks trailed 2-1 and 4-1 at the intermissions before trying to draw

close with a pair of third period goals against Winnipeg.

Delaney Darby scored a pair for Pembina Valley, with the other goal coming from Abigail Brigg. Kasia Rakowski kept the Hawks in the game with 42 saves, but Pembina Valley was outshot 47-33.

The Hawks then trailed 2-0 and 4-0 at the intermissions against Eastman, which put it away with three more goals in the third period.

Vayha Willis took the loss in allowing the seven goals on 37 shots

through 52 minutes of play. Rakowski made nine saves in eight minutes of play, with the overall shots on goal 46-23 in favour of the Selects.

Pembina Valley remains in seventh place at 3-11-1 for seven points, which is four up on Central Plains and two behind Interlake in sixth place.

The Hawks have a busy three-game weekend starting with Yellowhead Friday in Morden followed by Central Plains in Portage Saturday and then the Winnipeg Avros Sunday afternoon at Seven Oaks.

The **Voice**

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NOTICE TO CREDITORS**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**

IN THE MATTER of the ESTATE of **WELLESLEY ERNEST WHITE**, late of the City of Morden, in Manitoba, deceased.

All claims against the above Estate, duly verified by Statutory Declaration, must be filed with the undersigned at 309 Stephen Street, Morden, Manitoba, R6M 1V1 within thirty (30) days of the date of this publication.

DATED at the City of Morden, in Manitoba this 7th day of December, 2023.

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take a break

> GAMES

SUDOKU

					8			
1			9	7		3		
	9	5		3				
4	1		2					6
		6					8	4
			1					
					9	8		2
					7			5
	5	3		2	6			9

Level: Intermediate

Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

Here's How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

6	1	4	9	2	8	3	5	7
5	3	9	7	1	4	8	2	6
2	7	8	6	5	3	1	4	9
3	2	7	4	9	1	6	8	5
4	8	1	5	6	7	9	3	2
9	6	5	3	8	2	7	1	4
7	4	2	1	3	9	5	6	8
8	5	3	2	7	6	4	9	1
1	9	6	8	4	5	2	7	3

Sudoku Answer

	S	D		A	H	E	Z	D	V
	T	E	E	T	V	T	E	E	N
V	N	E	R	V	R	V	I	S	T
T	I	O	R	B	M	E	S	E	V
O	G	N	I	W	O	B	S	E	I
	H	V	T	U	E	G	V	P	
E	G	V	S	S	V	P	S	V	T
V	A	P	E	S	T	U	B	E	N
S	E	T	E	T	E	D	E	S	S
	D	E	K	E	S	N	E	G	
D	E	D	V	R	V	V	I	T	V
T	E	V	O	V	T	P	E	G	V
W	V	H	S	P	O	R	P	H	O
	C	V	P	T	V	P	X	V	W
	T	O	V	P	D	V	E	P	V

Crossword Answer

**CROSSWORD****CLUES ACROSS**

1. Mimic
4. Payroll firm
7. Perform in a play
10. Opine: __ philosophical
11. Crony
12. Political action committee
13. 1991 Wimbledon winner
15. Affirmative
16. Exclamation of disgust
19. Action of connecting
21. A way to calm
23. Especially fine or decorative clothing
24. Walked proudly
25. Group of people related through male heir
26. Supplemented with difficulty
27. Soft touch
30. Erases
34. Spanish river
35. A princess can detect it
36. Clouds of gas
41. A way to get through
45. Part of a book
46. Southwestern US state
47. Fields where rice is grown
50. Area in Ghana
54. Sayings
55. Involve deeply
56. Compels to act
57. "Ignore all rules"
59. Indoor entertainment space
60. Born of
61. Back muscle
62. Sea dweller
63. Tools that resemble an axe
64. Prefix denoting class or kind
65. Tooth caregiver

CLUES DOWN

1. Inspiring
2. Put into a box
3. Breathes out
4. Pacify
5. Patriotic society for women
6. Fell down
7. Clothing
8. Dishwasher detergent brand
9. Former French republic
13. Single lens reflex
14. Men's fashion accessory
17. Consumed
18. Marry
20. __ up: intensifies
22. Body of water
27. People of southern Benin
28. Decorate a cake with frosting
29. Snag
31. Yearly tonnage (abbr.)

			1	2	3		4	5	6		7	8	9		
			10				11				12				
13	14						15				16			17	18
19						20			21	22					
23									24						
				25					26						
27	28	29							30				31	32	33
34												35			
36				37	38	39	40		41	42	43	44			
				45					46						
47	48	49							50				51	52	53
54									55						
56							57	58			59				
			60				61				62				
			63				64				65				

32. Records brain activity (abbr.)
33. Car mechanics group
37. Brought up to snuff
38. __ faire: Economic approach
39. Phil __, former CIA
40. Affixed
41. Period of adolescence
42. Substance
43. Danced
44. Baked without its shell
47. Parts per billion (abbr.)
48. Satisfaction
49. Balkans river
51. Christmas carols
52. Partner to tonic
53. "The Godfather" character Johnny
58. Swiss river

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The Winkler Morden Voice

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NOTICE TO CREDITORS

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

IN THE MATTER of the Estate of **Terry Wayne Brown**, late of La Salle, Manitoba, Deceased.

ALL CLAIMS against the above Estate, duly verified by Statutory Declaration, must be sent to the undersigned at 504 Stanley Avenue, Winkler, Manitoba, R6W 0M3, within four (4) weeks of the date of this publication.

GILMOUR BRAUL HIEBERT
LAW OFFICE
Solicitor for the Estate

LAND FOR SALE BY TENDER

Land for Sale by Tender

Completed Tenders and a \$10,000.00 deposit of the Tender Price are invited to be received up to 12:00 PM (noon) on January 3rd, 2024 (the "deadline") on the property described below, which Tenders and Deposits shall be received at:

PKF Lawyers,
326 Stephen Street, Morden, Manitoba R6M 1T5
Attn: Stéphane Warnock
Ph: 204-745-2028

Property for sale:

1. NE ¼ 12-2-7 WPM (EXCLUDING LOT 1)

155.44 acres

Issuing from CT #3128454/4 (the "Land")

-Located in the Rural Municipality of Pembina

Conditions of Tender

1. Financing must be pre-approved.
2. Tenders to be in the form prepared by PKF Lawyers. To obtain tender form or more info, contact Jessica Waddingham or Stéphane Warnock @ PKF Lawyers.
3. Each Tender must be accompanied by a certified cheque, payable to PKF Lawyers (in trust), in the amount of \$10,000.00. Deposits of tenders not accepted will be returned to the tenderers.
4. Highest Tender or any Tender will not necessarily be accepted.
5. The Possession date and the due date of the balance of Tender Price shall be within 15 days of Community Planning's issuance of the Certificate of Approval (4.56 acre yardsite being subdivided).
6. The maker of any Tender relies entirely upon their personal inspection and knowledge of the Land, independent of the representations made by the vendor or the solicitor and agent of the vendor. The Land will be sold "as is" and the bidder is solely responsible to determine the value and condition of the Land, Land quality, Land use, environmental condition and any other information pertaining to the Land.

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CORPORATE SERVICES
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PUBLIC NOTICE

REGARDING SPECIAL SERVICE PROPOSAL NO. 44 - BY-LAW NO. 2304-23 TO PROMOTE AND IMPROVE HEALTH CARE FOR THE CITY OF WINKLER AND THE SURROUNDING REGION.

The Council of the City of Winkler has scheduled a public hearing at Winkler City Hall, 185 Main Street, Winkler, MB on the 9th day of January, 2024 at 6:30 p.m. to present the following special service proposal:

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF SPECIAL SERVICES PLAN NO. 44
The City of Winkler proposes to support the Funding request received from the Boundary Trails Health Centre Foundation and the ALG Professional Centre (Clinic). The Special Service is intended to promote and improve health care for the City of Winkler and the surrounding region. Improved health care in the region is expected to increase population growth and attract businesses. This improvement is a joint effort with the RM of Stanley and the City of Morden. The City of Winkler will contribute a total of \$2,122,000.00.

The Special Service Tax to be levied under this proposal will be all rateable properties within the City of Winkler.

The estimated cost of the Special Service plan for the next four years is as follows:

2024	\$530,500.00	2026	\$530,500.00
2025	\$530,500.00	2027	\$530,500.00

The special service tax will be levied annually, from 2024 to 2027, inclusive on a per parcel basis against all rateable properties, including otherwise exempt properties, within the City of Winkler.

The cost of the service will be as follows:

All rates are based on an annual basis:

All rateable properties: \$91.00 per parcel (assessment roll number) in each of the years 2024 to 2027.

A written objection may be filed with the City Manager, at 185 main Street, Winkler, Manitoba, prior to the commencement of the hearing. At the hearing, Council will hear any potential ratepayer who wishes to make a presentation, ask questions or register an objection to the special service proposal.

All objections, written or verbal, must be filed prior to the adjournment of the hearing and must include the name, address and property description of the person filing the objection and the grounds of their objection.

Copies of the Special Services Plan No. 44 are available at the City of Winkler office at 185 Main Street, Winkler, MB, and on the municipal website at www.cityofwinkler.ca.

Dated at the City of Winkler this 5th day of December, 2023, and issued pursuant to Section 318 of The Municipal Act.

Jody Penner
City Manager
City of Winkler
204-325-9524

PUBLIC NOTICE



PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE is hereby given that the Rural Municipality of Stanley's 2022 Audited Consolidated Financial Statements are available for review in the office of the Rural Municipality of Stanley and may be viewed by any persons during regular business hours.

Terry Penner, C. Mgr.
Chief Administrative Officer
R.M. of Stanley

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The **Voice** *Winkler Morden*

CARD OF THANKS

Thank-you to Boundary Trails staff and volunteers; and to our friends and neighbours for the support during the illness and subsequent death on October 21, 2023 of Elton Dunseath of Winkler, my beloved husband. It was a blessing to be in such a caring community! Elton's favorite Psalm 121:8 says "the Lord will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore".

-Sincerely,
Maggie Barnett

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Preference will be given to those candidates holding a valid provincial Millwright or Industrial Mechanic ticket. Candidates who do not hold a valid ticket will be expected to enrol in the apprenticeship program to obtain their ticket as soon as possible.

Overtime and on-call duties are required. The successful applicant will possess excellent written and verbal communication skills, trouble shooting skills, and be a team player.

The following would be considered an asset for this position:

- Experience in grain handling, processing, or manufacturing facility
- Experience in industrial equipment maintenance and repair
- Ability to read blueprints and technical documents
- Pressure or structural welding tickets and related experience

This is a regular full time position providing an excellent wage and benefits package. Bunge is committed to providing a safe, healthy, and rewarding workplace for all employees.

Starting Wages:

- Mechanic \$32.70/hour
- Red Seal Millwright: \$38.08/hour

A job description for this position can be found online on the Bunge website: <https://obs.bunge.com/>. enter "Altona" in the field "Search by Location". Click on "Maintenance Mechanic/Millwright" to read the description. Applications should be made online with an attached resume.

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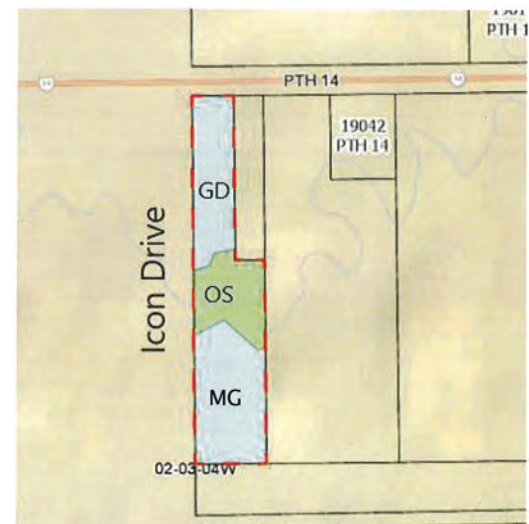


UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE PLANNING ACT NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

On the date and at the time and location shown below, a PUBLIC HEARING will be held to receive representations from any person(s) who wish to make them in respect to the following matter:

THE RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF STANLEY BY-LAW 16-23
Being an AMENDMENT to the R.M. OF STANLEY
ZONING BY-LAW 8-18, AS AMENDED.

HEARING: R.M. of Stanley Council Chambers
LOCATION: 1-23111 PTH 14, SW 7-3-4W
DATE & TIME: December 21, 2023 at 9:15 a.m.
GENERAL INTENT: To re-zone a parcel of land in the RM of Stanley
From: "AL" Agricultural Limited
To: "GD" General Development,
"MG" General Industrial and
"OS" Recreation and Open Space
AREA: Part NE 2-3-4W



FOR INFORMATION CONTACT: Melissa Groening, Planning and Development Officer
Rural Municipality of Stanley
1-23111 PTH 14, Stanley MB R6P 0B1
Phone: (204) 325-4101
Email: mgroening@rmofstanley.ca

A copy of the above proposal and supporting material may be inspected at the location noted above during normal office hours, Monday to Friday. Copies may be made and extracts taken there from, upon request.

COMING EVENTS

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'Altona' doc asks: How do you forgive what you can't forget?

By Lori Penner

Many people who grew up in the community of Altona will always remember the horrific event that took place on Nov. 17, 1990, when two local teens were tied up, assaulted, and left to die in a burning house.

In a captivating new documentary titled *Altona*, the Affolter brothers—Heath, Jon, Nathan and Thomas—and executive producer Craig Langdon delve into the profound events that unfolded that dark night.

After years of interviews and production, the film debuted Dec. 2 at the Whistler Film Festival and has been livestreamed by hundreds, many from Altona itself, in the weeks since.

The documentary features animations of eyewitness accounts, archival news footage and interviews with people like Tyler Pelke, who was 14 when he survived the brutal attack that took the life of his friend, 15-year-old Curtis Klassen.

Altona focuses on Pelke's survival story, but also includes the entire town's experience, sharing the enduring impact felt even 33 years later.

Heath Affolter explains that the goal was to do justice to the community, with respect to the raw emotions that are still carried by so many.

The film includes comments and memories of those who were most impacted by the 1990 incident, offering their own perspectives on forgiveness and recovery.

Affolter said the idea for the documentary came to him after hearing Pelke share his story.

"I just happened to be in the audience for one of Tyler's inspirational talks. I was blown away. I was fresh out of film school at the time. I think as a filmmaker you tend to look at the world as stories, and anything intriguing like that is fascinating. I was really affected. It's an incredible story. It's harrowing. It's intense but with this line of positivity and hope and inspiration within it."

The pair talked about the option of turning the story into a film. In 2020, Langdon came on board.

"Craig was able to get us to the green light phase of it. When we set out to

"IT'S AN INCREDIBLE STORY ... INTENSE BUT WITH THIS LINE OF POSITIVITY AND HOPE AND INSPIRATION WITHIN IT."

do it, it was very much the Tyler Pelke story in talking about his specific journey," Affolter says. "But as we started filming it, it became clear to us that this story was so much bigger than Tyler himself and there were so many people that were involved and affected by it and so many different perspectives of what happened. Not only during that time but since that time. Back then we started calling it *Pelke* and that's when it changed to being called *Altona*.

The documentary explores themes of forgiveness and trauma recovery.

A unique aspect of *Altona* is the inclusion of the perspective of Earl Giesbrecht, the perpetrator of the attack.

After a year of effort, Langdon secured a meeting with Giesbrecht, who, though not appearing on camera, provided a letter read by an actor in the film.

Langdon says it was vital to include Giesbrecht's viewpoint.

"It shook the community and that's what makes this story so beautiful. Understanding the different perspectives and through this tragedy, the healing that took place. For everyone it was a different journey," he says.



SUPPLIED PHOTO

From left: Nathan Affolter, Thomas Affolter, Craig Langdon, Tyler Pelke, Heath Affolter, and Jon Affolter at a screening of the new documentary "Altona."

"I realized there is another perspective and that is Earl. He's on his own path of healing. If we're going to be objective and explore all aspects through this film, Earl's story was important to share."

Langdon travelled to meet Earl, now on full parole, and a five-minute cup of coffee turned into a three-hour dinner.

"It was an impactful three hours. He felt the genuineness of what we were trying to create. He decided to share so we just did an off-camera interview at one point and that's what you

see on film."

The documentary brings a variety of other perspectives—from Klassen's best friends to both mothers recalling the pain, shock and grief that had to be processed and how it impacted their lives.

Continued on page 28

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!

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Schwaller and Horgan capture titles at DEKALB Superspiel

By Ty Dilello

The DEKALB Superspiel, Manitoba's biggest World Curling Tour event of the season, was played this past weekend at the Morris Curling Club.

From Dec. 1 to 4, 24 women's teams and 16 men's teams gave local curling fans quite the show, as players came to Morris from across Canada, the United States, Switzerland and South Korea.

On the women's side of the event, Switzerland's Xenia Schwaller defeated Alberta's Serena Gray-Withers 6-5 in an extra end in Monday night's championship final. Schwaller earned \$10,500 for the victory.

Seven Manitoba teams competed in the women's event, but unfortunately, none reached the playoff round.

Tanner Horgan of northern Ontario took home the men's title in Morris with a 4-2 victory in the final over Winnipeg's Braden Calvert. In addition to Calvert, two other Manitoba teams reached the playoff in Winnipeg's Ryan Wiebe and Jordon McDonald — both got to the semi-finals before losing out to Horgan and Calvert.

The men's event also boasted a celebrity appearance from Jared Allen,



Local curler Anna Ginters of Altona got a picture with Jared Allen, a former all-star NFL player with the Minnesota Vikings, who has now tried his hand at curling at the DEKALB Superspiel.

a former NFL star and Hall of Fame nominee with the Minnesota Vikings. The former football player, who has begun curling in his retirement, has his sights set on representing the United States in curling at the 2026



PHOTO BY TY DILELLO

Switzerland's Xenia Schwaller was victorious at the 2023 DEKALB Superspiel in Morris that was held from Dec. 1-4, with a dramatic 6-5 extra end over Alberta's Serena Gray-Withers.

Winter Olympics in Italy.

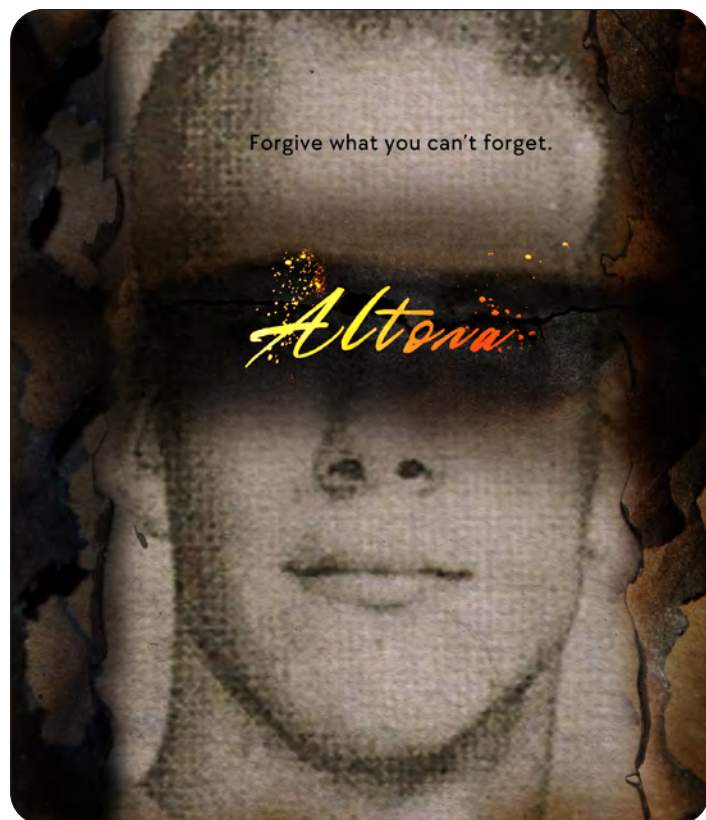
Allen, who was curling for Team Rich Ruuhonen out of Minnesota,

reached the playoff round before losing to Jordon McDonald in the quarterfinals.

> DOCUMENTARY, FROM PG. 27

The film's opening features Klassen's mother, Milly, expressing a sentiment that guided her through the years following her son's murder: "Forgiveness does not excuse their actions. Forgiveness stops their action from destroying your heart."

In producing the film, Langdon says he has a greater



appreciation for the story behind the events.

"Knowing that there's a lot more depth than just the headline. It's a gift that has been given to me through this process."

Affolter says the film changed his perspective on forgiveness.

"If Tyler was able to forgive Earl for what he did, why is it that so many of us have trouble forgiving for things that are so petty? I think my perspective changed throughout and it was much more the idea that there is no level of badness to make something unforgivable. Everybody has a different understanding of what forgiveness is and everybody is going to take their own time and their own process to be able to reach or not reach that point. There is no right or wrong within that. And no bar to be set for all of us. Everybody is different and everybody must let go on that journey in their own way."

Looking back, Pelke observes that how you relate to your experiences changes over time.

"Especially when you grow. When you continue to put in the work in and continue to self reflect. I relate to it differently now. I think about grace for myself in not being able to help Curt. Or grace for myself in how I've handled rela-

tionships in the past or just grace as I begin to see things differently. No, I don't think time softens it. I think it just changes how you relate to it. You feel things in a little different way. There's a gift that comes with time and retrospection."

Part of that forgiveness journey, he says, is forgiving yourself.

"Regret robs us of a lot of growth, and you can get stuck in there if you're not careful. I'm not perfect and I'm still working on things every day. For the folks who watched this film, I hope they can find further inspiration from whatever they see in that story. It's richer now because it shows a broader impact beyond what happened to me."

"Listening to the moms talk and Earl's statement, it all offers a lot of perspective. Maybe there's some healing in there, I know Milly wishes people would find it, and I hope people can find some forgiveness and peace by watching this."

Altona recently clinched the Whistler Film Festival World Documentary Award and is available for streaming across Canada until Dec. 17 online at whistlerfilmfestival.com.

"EVERYBODY HAS A DIFFERENT UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT FORGIVENESS IS AND EVERYBODY IS GOING TO TAKE THEIR OWN TIME AND THEIR OWN PROCESS TO BE ABLE TO REACH OR NOT REACH THAT POINT."